

MEETING MINUTES  
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
TRANSIT COMMITTEE

April 14, 2011

Maricopa Association of Governments Office  
302 North First Avenue, Suite 200, Cholla Room  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Phoenix: Debbie Cotton, Chair	*Paradise Valley: William Mead
*ADOT: Mike Normand	Peoria: Maher Hazine
Avondale: Rogene Hill	Queen Creek: Tom Condit
#Buckeye: Andrea Marquez	Scottsdale: Theresa Huish
Chandler: Dan Cook for RJ Zeder	Surprise: David Kohlbeck
*El Mirage: Leah Hubbard	Tempe: Greg Jordan for Jyme Sue McLaren
Gilbert: Ken Maruyama	*Tolleson: Chris Hagen
Glendale: Matthew Dudley for	Valley Metro Rail: Wulf Grote
Cathy Colbath	Youngtown: Grant Anderson
Goodyear: Cato Esquivel	Regional Public Transportation Authority:
Maricopa County: Mitch Wagner	Carol Ketcherside
*Mesa: Mike James	

\*Members neither present nor represented by proxy.   + - Attended by Videoconference  
# - Attended by Audioconference

OTHERS PRESENT

Marc Pearsall, MAG	Kristen Sexton, Avondale
Alice Chen, MAG	Jenna Goad, Glendale
DeDe Gaisthea	Gino Turrubiarres, Guadalupe
Jorge Luna, MAG	Jeff Martin, Mesa
Eileen Yazzie, MAG	David Moody, Peoria
	Jorie Bresnahan, Phoenix
	Tom Remes, Phoenix
	Bob Antila, Valley Metro-RPTA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:01a.m. by Chair Debbie Cotton. Chair Cotton welcomed everyone in attendance and announced that a quorum was present. She noted that one member was participating via teleconference, Ms. Andrea Marquez. Chair Cotton asked if there were any public comment cards, and there being none, proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

2. Approval of Draft February 10, 2010 Minutes

Chair Cotton asked if there were any comments or corrections to the Draft February 10, 2010 meeting minutes. Hearing no comments or corrections to the meeting minutes, Chair Cotton called for a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes. Mr. Maher Hazine moved to approve the motion. Ms. Teresa Huish seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Call to the Audience

Chair Cotton stated that she had not received any request to speak cards from the audience and moved onto the next item on the agenda.

4. Transit Program Manager's Report

Ms. Eileen Yazzie explained that she was giving the report on behalf of Kevin Wallace. She explained that the MAG Offices would be under construction in June, July and August for the conference room additions and office relocations. She noted that MAG would like to partner with the member agencies for alternative locations for Committee meetings. MAG would most likely begin with RPTA / METRO for a June meeting, as they were located just down the street. However she solicited invitations and volunteers from East Valley and West Valley members so that a meeting could be held in July and August in those regions of the Valley. She requested that those interested in hosting a summertime meeting could contact Marc Pearsall.

She also spoke briefly about the FY2011 Federal Budget, which had just been passed via a Continuing Resolution by Congress. Budget details were still being worked out, and Eileen noted a variety of fiscal issues that were under debate, specifically reductions and recisions of Amtrak, High Speed Rail and Transit funding. FTA New Starts-Small Starts were targeted for reduction by \$400 million, but details were unknown on specifically which federal funding pots were affected. FHWA was to see a reduction of \$2.5 billion, with \$47 million affecting the State of Arizona-ADOT. She advised that the specifics of the budget and its affect on the MAG Region and State of Arizona were unknown at this time. Chair Cotton thanked Ms. Yazzie for her presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no further comments, Chair Cotton proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

5. Programming Federal Funds for Preventive Maintenance in 2012-2015

Chair Cotton introduced Ms. Eileen Yazzie of MAG to brief the committee on Programming Federal Funds for Preventive Maintenance in 2012-2015.

Ms. Yazzie advised on the agenda item and its accompanying agenda packet and changes for the TIP. She referred to the motion wherein beginning in FY2012 the allocations, as identified in the current TIP for each operating agency, will be reduced by 25% each year, and an additional 25% for each subsequent year (50% reduction in 2013, 75% reduction in 2014), the remaining federal funds will be distributed using the new methodology. She also reminded the committee that the motion stipulated that beginning in 2015 and continuing in the future, PM funds will be completely distributed under the new methodology. She added that the new methodology featured a split, which first distributed the amounts for bus and rail based on operating expense then distributes funds for bus operators based on a combination of passenger and vehicle revenue miles (passenger miles weighted by 10% and vehicle revenue miles weighted by 90%). She further added that the distribution methodology would be updated annually using the most recent NTD published data and the TIP project listings will be modified accordingly. Additionally, it recommended modification of the FY20 11-20 15 MAG TIP as shown in the Project Changes table in the packet. She noted that MAG staff decided to explain the methodology in great detail within the motion, so that the Committee could better understand this issue, which the region had worked on diligently for many months. She requested that the committee recommend a motion in order to proceed with this important issue.

Chair Cotton thanked Ms. Yazzie for her presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mr. Matthew Dudley requested further detail on attachment 1 within the Glendale line item. He requested a new line item or column that showed previous PM numbers, vs the new PM numbers, to better reflect what the financial impact would be for each jurisdiction. Discussion followed.

Ms. Yazzie referred to attachment 1, table 7, and she noted that a new table could be added to address Glendale's concern while showing the history lineage of the funding changes.

Chair Cotton asked if there were any additional comments or questions. Hearing no further comments,

Mr. Greg Jordan thanked MAG staff and the regional agencies for working together over the past months to create a compromise solution for this issue. He moved to approve the motion as written. Ms. Carol Ketcherside seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Hearing no further comments, Chair Cotton proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

6. FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program Transit Projects

Chair Cotton introduced Marc Pearsall of MAG to brief the committee on FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program Transit Projects

Mr. Pearsall presented a brief update on the FY 2012 MAG Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Annual Budget. He noted to the committee that there were a variety of projects included in the UPWP that pertained to transit. He further explained that the elements of the budget document were currently about 70 percent complete and that MAG was still accepting potential UPWP projects for consideration and invited the members to submit those requests in the coming weeks. He requested that if any of the members had any changes, edits, issues or concerns with the existing UPWP, to contact MAG staff immediately so that they could be included in the May Draft. He also explained that in regards to future UPWP project requests, that the Transit Committee may begin a process in fall 2011 wherein new project requests for FY2013 are brought forth for consideration, so that they may begin to be circulated in a more uniform manner during the following spring for review by the MAG Committee process. This would allow for thoughtful discussion for a few months and avoid the rush of submitting the projects each spring prior to their publication in the summer.

He mentioned two noted transit studies for the coming year and referred members to their project descriptions in their packets. The first was the Southwest Valley Local Transit System Study, managed by Mr. Jorge Luna with assistance from Alice Chen and Marc Pearsall. The study will identify opportunities and strategies for developing an integrated local transit system in the southwest valley, focusing on the communities of Avondale, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, west Phoenix, Tolleson, Buckeye and the surrounding portions of Maricopa County. The second was the Designing Transit Accessible Communities Study, managed by Alice Chen with assistance from Jorge Luna and Marc Pearsall. This would use "TOD-lite" (Transit Oriented Development) research to focus on local and regional bus services, but not high capacity transit. He added that another study outcome would evaluate increasing accessibility to housing, goods, services, and recreation for the pedestrian transit user.

Mr. Pearsall also explained another recent \$200,000 increase in funding by Management Committee for MAG On-Call FY2012 contracts. These small task requests, usually in the range of \$25,000-\$50,000, allow for expedited studies should they be recommended by Regional Council. He added that one such small study within that increase was the new West Valley Rail Corridor Options Cost Analysis, which would analyze the creation of a unit-cost tool that would allow MAG staff to gauge the estimate cost of rehabilitating Union Pacific's moth-balled Wellton Branch Railroad between Buckeye and Wellton, for both freight and Amtrak passenger service. This would require partnering with ADOT as they had previously performed such a cost analysis in 2000, which was in need of a recent update. Another element within the cost analysis would be to review the potential cost of new proposed railroad lines to be built between Gila Bend and Buckeye, and Buckeye to Morristown via the Interstate 11-Hassayampa Valley. Freight traffic, Punta Colonet and Pacific Ports traffic and passenger service may benefit from those potential improvements to the West Valley.

Chair Cotton thanked Mr. Pearsall for his presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Ms. Carol Ketcherside requested that the latest updated Draft UPWP version be posted on the website. Ms. Yazzie noted that the full version of the Draft April UPWP was located on the MAG website posted under Management Committee. She added that it would eventually be posted for final approval by Regional Council in the May cycle. Mr. Wulf Grote noted that there would be some additional METRO project updates and budget items that should be included in the new UPWP. Mr. Pearsall replied that he would obtain the changes and additions from METRO staff.

Mr. Dan Cook requested some clarification regarding new MAG employment positions listed within the packet on page 6 and wondered if the three positions were associated with any of the new FY2012 UPWP projects. Ms. Yazzie replied that the three additional full-time positions that MAG were adding were not related to the new projects, as the new projects would be performed and managed by current MAG staff. One new full-time position was related to the Information Service Department for Census-GIS data, the other two positions were for the Transportation Department as a Safety/ITS Engineer for support FHWA and ADOT safety projects, and an additional engineer for modeling duties.

Mr. Dudley inquired if there was a drop-dead date for new UPWP requests. Mr. Pearsall said that there was no firm drop-dead date, but advised on submitting requests within the next week to ensure their inclusion in the new Draft May UPWP. Mr. Dudley also requested that the new Draft May UPWP could be circulated one last time for the benefit of Transit Committee review prior to the May Council cycle. Mr. Pearsall added that it would be provided for review.

Mr. Jordan asked about the status of the Zone Fare Feasibility Study (ZFFS) within the UPWP. Ms. Ketcherside replied that the RPTA's item was no longer under consideration for the FY2012 UPWP and should be deleted.

Chair Cotton thanked Mr. Pearsall for his presentation and Ms. Yazzie for her clarifications and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no further comments, Chair Cotton proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

## 7. METRO Light Rail Projects Update

Chair Cotton introduced Mr. Ben Limmer of METRO to brief and update the committee on METRO current and future MAG Region light rail and streetcar projects.

Mr. Limmer began his presentation with an overall map of the proposed 57-mile METRO light rail/high capacity transit system. He noted some encouraging news in regards to an increase in monthly ridership, which was over 1.2 million for March 2011. A table also showed total monthly boardings and he added that on April 8, 2011 was their busiest ever day since opening in December 2008, with a one-day record total of 55,800, thanks in part to a variety of events

in the downtown. He also followed with discussions of average hourly boardings. Mr. Limmer mentioned the current state of Public Transportation Fund (PTF) funds and its affect on regional transit projects, as well as ADOT forecasted revenues for FY 2008 – FY 2011. Mr. Limmer gave in depth explanations on the Central Mesa LRT Extension, a 3.1 mile, 4 station extension in Mesa which will open in 2016. He showcased the projected daily ridership of 9,750, along with a capital cost estimate of \$198 million (YOES). The extension was to be funded by 5309 Small Starts (38%), CMAQ (22%), and Regional PTF (40%). The project was recommended for PCGA (Project Construction Grant Agreement) with \$38 million was included in the President's proposed FY 2012 budget. He also explained next steps for the project, with an overview of the following milestones: project development rating ("Medium – High") in August 2010; Initiation of project development in September 2010; completion of 30% design in April 2011; environmental clearance in May 2011; final design in April 2012; construction start(NTP) in Fall 2012; and construction completion in March 2016.

Mr. Limmer followed with an overview of the Tempe Streetcar Project, a 2.6 mile line expected to open in Tempe in 2016. He noted the projected daily ridership of 1,100 – 1,200 per day (without special events), along with a capital cost estimate of \$129 million, with an annual operating budget of \$3.1 million. Five vehicles (4 base and 1 spare) would be purchased for the project. He also explained next steps for the project, with an overview of the following milestones: project definition from January to August 2011; initiation of project development in January 2012; environmental clearance in Spring 2012; request for PCGA in Fall 2012; construction start(NTP) in Summer 2013; and construction completion in Fall 2016.

He further explained a summary of the Phoenix West Project, an 11 mile, 9 station line from downtown Phoenix to West Phoenix expected to open in 2021. He noted the projected daily ridership of 35,000 per day, along with a capital cost estimate of \$980 million to \$1.08 billion, with an annual operating and maintenance budget of \$15-17 million. A variety of alignment options included Jefferson, I-17 frontage and I-10 northside. He also explained next steps for the project, with an overview of the following milestones: neighborhood outreach from Spring to Summer 2011; local / regional LPA approvals in Fall 2011; project definition from Fall 2011- Fall 2012; Draft EIS from Fall 2011 to Spring 2013; and request for entrance into preliminary engineering in Fall 2012. Mr. Wulf Grote added that in regards to the MAG process, due to the extended schedule of working with the adjacent neighborhoods near the State Capitol, there would be a delay in recommending an alternative until the Fall of 2011.

Mr. Limmer also noted a summary of the Glendale AA Phase I Project, a high capacity transit study whose purpose is to analyze transit corridors linking Downtown Glendale or West Phoenix with the Glendale Loop 101 Entertainment Complex. Five alternative corridors would be studied in the Phase I Alternatives Analysis, with the following elements included: evaluation criteria, mobility improvements, includes ridership forecasting, cost and cost effectiveness, transit-supportive land use, economic development, community and environmental impacts. He also explained next steps for the project, with an overview of the following milestones: notice to proceed in Spring 2010; identification of alternatives in Summer 2010; evaluation methodology in Fall 2010; evaluation of alternatives in Spring 2011; and study completion in Summer 2011.

Mr. Limmer continued with a presentation on the South Central Feasibility Study, a high capacity transit study whose purpose is to analyze a transit corridor linking South Central Ave from Downtown Phoenix to Dobbins Rd near South Mountain. The study would include the following elements: up to three alignments/routes; preliminary ridership forecasts and cost range, engineering and community issues and constraints, land use and economic development and feasibility determination. He also explained next steps for the project, with an overview of the following milestones: selection of consultants in December 2010; METRO Board approval in May 2011; notice to proceed in Spring 2011; and study completion in Summer 2012.

Mr. Limmer also noted a summary of the Arizona Avenue Feasibility Study, a high capacity transit study whose purpose is to understand measures necessary to make Arizona Ave a feasible corridor for both regional and federal funding. The study would include the following elements: identify potential transit service plan enhancements; understand financial implications of expanding transit services; potential land use scenarios that could result in sufficient transit trips to warrant high capacity transit; and Identify planning tools and policies to promote transit oriented development.

Mr. Limmer completed his presentation with an update on the on the Gilbert Road LRT Extension Study, a high capacity transit study whose purpose is to analyze a transit corridor linking the end of line METRO light rail in Central Mesa to a new eastern terminus of Gilbert Road. from Downtown Phoenix to Dobbins Rd near South Mountain. The 18-month Alternatives Analysis study would include the following elements: planning study outline; project definition; station locations; street configuration; significant utility relocations; other support facilities; conceptual engineering plans; and public involvement.

Mr. Limmer concluded by adding that he would return with another project update in late summer. Chair Cotton thanked Mr. Limmer for his presentation and asked if there were any questions or comments. Hearing no further comments, Chair Cotton proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### 8. Request for Future Agenda Items

Chair Cotton asked the members of the Committee if there were any issues that they would like added as future agenda items. Hearing no further comments, Chair Cotton proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

#### 9. Next Meeting Date

Chair Cotton thanked those present for attending the MAG Transit Committee meeting. She announced that the next meeting of the MAG Transit Committee would be held on Thursday, May 12, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in the MAG Cholla Room. There being no further business, Chair Cotton adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.